

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend claims 1-3, as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A ballast device for a discharge lamp (16), having a DC voltage supply stage (2), semiconductor switches (10,11) which are switched at a radiofrequency clock frequency for the purpose of changing the current direction through the discharge lamp (16), a starting transformer (15), to which the DC voltage of the DC voltage supply stage (2) can be supplied via a series capacitor (14), and a ballast inductance (17) which is connected to an electrode, not connected to the starting transformer (15), of the discharge lamp (16), characterized in that, between a connecting point (27) between the series capacitor (14) and the starting transformer (15), on the one hand, and a connecting point (26) between the discharge lamp (16) and the ballast inductance (17), on the other hand, a capacitor (24) is connected in series with a switch (23), and in that the capacitor (24) forms, with the ballast inductance (17), a series resonant circuit which is tuned to a higher harmonic of the clock frequency.
2. (Original) A ballast device as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the series resonant circuit is tuned to the third to sixth harmonic of the clock frequency.
3. (Currently Amended) The ballast device as claimed in claim 1 or 2, characterized in that a resistor (25) is connected in parallel with the capacitor (24).